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Re: Carrying cell phone numbers from one carrier to another.

I believe it is essential to allow consumers to carry their cell phone numbers from one carrier to another. I have recently gone through a very frustrating and expensive ordeal involving this matter. I bought a used car that had an integrated phone installed. After weeks of talking to uninformed, uneducated employees at cell phone outlets, I finally determined that this phone was not capable of supporting my existing AT&T service. It was a "Cingular" phone, not an "AT&T" phone. Since the car is a stick shift, and since I don't believe in holding the phone while driving anyway, I had to spend \$1500 to change out the car's phone system in order to keep the AT&T phone number that my many clients have for me.

I believe that not allowing consumers the ability to carry their number to another carrier places us at the mercy of the wireless carriers. We are trapped by whichever carrier we first subscribe with, making consumer choice impossible. Remember also that they preset the phone hardware to make it impossible to change carriers without buying new hardware. There's no basic difference between an AT&T phone and a Verizon phone, but if you want to change carriers, they will tell you that you must buy a new phone. In my opinion, this is another scam that should be investigated. It just cost me \$1500.

We have always been able to transport our landline numbers because it's importance to the consumer is so obvious it defies discussion. At this point, there are nearly as many cell phone users as there are landline users. The cell phone number is no different.

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